



# Southmoreland School District 2021-2022 Return to School Frequently Asked Questions

We are excited to begin the new school year with our students, families and community. To assist with some commonly asked questions, we have prepared a list of them with our answers for you. If you don't find the answer to a specific question about our return to school plan, please reach out to your buildings. The phone numbers are:

SPC: 724-887-2026

SES: 724-887-2020

SMS: 724-887-2029

SHS: 724-887-2010

## **Who are the district academic administrators?**

The administrators in our schools are:

Mr. Heitchue, SPC principal and Director of Special Education

Mrs. Kuchar-Long, SES Principal

Mrs. Sutton, SMS Principal

Mr. Krofcheck, SHS Principal

Dr. Clara, Assistant to the Superintendent

Mr. Mascia, Superintendent

## **When is the first day of school?**

The first day of school for students in the Southmoreland School District is **Wednesday, September 1, 2021.**

## **Are masks required by the school district?**

No. Masks are recommended by the district at this time but not required. However, as it is a federal mandate, all students and adults riding on buses must be masked regardless of whether they are vaccinated or not.

## **Should we be concerned about COVID 19 quarantining and possible closures?**

Yes, it is possible. As we did in the spring, we are required to notify the Department of Health and conduct contact tracing. As the Pennsylvania Department of Health directs,

we would be contacting possible exposures and notifying students regarding quarantining.

The Pennsylvania Department of Health refers to the CDC's guidance for schools. This link details the most recent guidance from the CDC:

<https://www.education.pa.gov/Schools/safeschools/emergencyplanning/COVID-19/SchoolReopeningGuidance/ReopeningPreKto12/CDCGuidanceInformation/Pages/default.aspx>

The Pennsylvania Department of Health guidelines for contact tracing and quarantining are:

- Schools should continue to work with DOH or county or municipal health departments (CMHD) to complete contact tracing for individuals diagnosed or exposed to COVID-19. As part of the contact tracing process, DOH and CMHDs will continue to work with schools to gather information about potential close contacts.
- The CDC guidance adds the following exception to the definition of close contact:
  - In the K–12 indoor classroom setting, the close contact definition excludes students who were within 3 to 6 feet of an infected student (laboratory-confirmed or a clinically compatible illness) where:
    - both students were engaged in consistent and correct use of well-fitting face masks; and
    - other K–12 school prevention strategies (such as universal and correct mask use, physical distancing, increased ventilation) were in place in the K–12 school setting.
  - This exception does not apply to teachers, staff, or other adults in the indoor classroom setting.

### **What about fall sports?**

Currently, the District's fall Athletic Plan does not require students or adults to wear masks at competitions. However, as it is a federal mandate, all students and adults riding on buses must be masked regardless of whether they are vaccinated or not.

### **What happens if my student is required to quarantine?**

To allow for students of all levels to access and be supported, daily assignments and materials will be posted to teacher classrooms so that students may work on those items with the assistance of a parent or guardian as well as when he or she may be feeling able to do so. All student lessons and assignments will be asynchronous unless a classroom or school closure occurs. In those instances, online learning will be synchronous.

## **How will I be notified?**

After contact tracing is complete, the principal(s) will send a message to the parents/guardians of the students so that they are notified of the exposure. This message will contain information regarding the next steps for students and families to take.

## **May a student return to in-person instruction if he/she receives a negative Covid test result?**

A student will need to quarantine for 10 days after last exposure to an infected person or a seven-day quarantine with a negative test on or after Day 5 of quarantine.

## **Will a student be marked absent if he/she is in quarantine?**

If a student is not physically present, he/she will be marked as a medically excused absence.

## **What learning model will be provided if there is a full school closure?**

In the event of a school closure or classroom closure, students and faculty will follow the virtual schedules that will be posted on teacher Google Classroom websites.

## **What is the virtual option provided by the district?**

Southmoreland School District's virtual option for the 2021-2022 school year is called SOLA (Southmoreland Online Learning Academy). The district has enrolled students in the program for over a decade. Information about SOLA may be found here:

<https://wiueacademy.org/>

eAcademy course list: <https://sis.wiueacademy.org/PublicStudentCourseList.aspx>

Southmoreland Login: <https://sis.wiueacademy.org/PublicWelcome.aspx?ai=19>

If you would like to learn more about this option or to talk with someone about it, please contact your student's school at your convenience. Mr. Mascia is our district Online Educational Administrator--you may email him at [masciav@southmoreland.net](mailto:masciav@southmoreland.net) as well.

**Will students be issued lockers at SMS and SHS?**

Yes, students will be issued lockers at the schools.

**Should my student bring a water bottle to school?**

Yes. Each building is outfitted with water bottle filling stations in place of the water fountains.